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TAGS: PHUM PREL PO BU

SUBJECT: PORTUGAL: WILLING TO RAISE ADDITIONAL BURMA SANCTIONS

REF: 12/03 DEAN-ENAV EMAIL

Classified By: Classified By: Dep P/E Counselor Cari Enav for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

This is an action request. Please see para. 2.

Summary

¶11. (C) Portugal strongly supported the recent tightening of EU sanctions against Burma and is willing to consider further "smart" sanctions, including targeting three banks used by the Burmese government per the USG suggestion. MFA officials asked the USG to elaborate further on its proposal so that it could possibly be raised at the December 11 Experts Meeting on Burmese Sanctions and/or the December 10-11 Foreign Ministers meeting (GAERC). They also noted that EU officials raised Burma at the three recent EU-Asia summits in Singapore, Beijing and New Delhi.

More Sanctions ??

¶12. (C) Portugal strongly supported the tightening of EU sanctions against Burma (approved in October and adopted in November) and the approval of additional "smart" sanctions that do not harm Burma's civil society, according to officials from the MFA's Asia Division. EU foreign ministers plan to review the initial impact of these measures at the December 10-11 GAERC meeting in Brussels and discuss possible investment-related sanctions targeting credit agencies. It is unclear if the ministers will consider additional sanctions at this time, but our MFA interlocutors expressed a willingness to put the USG proposal, targeting three banks used by the Burmese government, on the table. They asked for further elaboration before the December 10-11 GAERC and the December 11 Experts Meeting on Burmese Sanctions. Officials also suggested a possible second DVC on the issue between Washington and Brussels.

Burma) "The Topic" at Recent Asia Summits

¶13. (C) Burma was high on the agenda during the three recent Asia summits) the November 22 EU-ASEAN Summit in Singapore, the November 28 EU-China Summit in Beijing, and the November 30 EU-India Summit in New Delhi. In Singapore, EU heads of government expressed strong concern about developments in Burma. In addition, EU Special Envoy to Burma Pietro Fassino held several bilateral meetings on the margins, encouraging ASEAN members to "confront the black sheep" in their midst, MFA officials said. In Beijing, EU officials thanked the Chinese for their positive influence on Burma, helping to pave the way for UN Special Envoy Gambari's visit as well as

facilitating meetings with the UN Human Rights Envoy and with Aung San Su Kyi, and encouraged continued engagement. The message was less favorable in New Delhi where EU leaders expressed disappointment in India's lack of commitment, as the world's largest democracy, to press its neighbor on human rights, according to officials.

Stephenson